

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Village Preservation, City Councilmember Harvey Epstein, Affordable Housing Advocates and Neighbors Blast City Zoning Allowing 538 ft. Tall Luxury Condo Tower with No Affordable Housing in Greenwich Village, Call For Changes**

NEW YORK, NY — Community organization Village Preservation and City Councilmember Harvey Epstein were today joined by neighbors and affordable housing advocates, including This Land Is Ours Community Land Trust, for a press conference in front of the construction site at 5 West 13th Street (just west of Fifth Avenue) to condemn the City's decision to allow a 538 ft. tall building with just 36 oversized super-luxury units and no affordable housing at this location.

Village Preservation and Councilmember Epstein noted that City officials claimed when promoting "City of Yes" that new zoning would encourage lower, squatter and more contextual buildings (the planned tower will be over twice the height of any nearby building) and would encourage the inclusion of new affordable housing, particularly at this location. They noted that based upon this approval, new "City of Yes" zoning actually encourages significantly taller and more oversized new super-luxury construction without including any affordable housing, and called for changes to the zoning to address this.

"We are deeply disappointed that the Mamdani Administration has chosen to approve this tower, saying current 'City of Yes' zoning rules allow it," **said Village Preservation Executive Director Andrew Berman.** "If that's the case, then those rules must be changed. Based upon this interpretation of the zoning, 'City of Yes' rules not only allow but actually encourage supertall, blockbusting towers like this that shatter neighborhood scale and offer no affordable housing in return — much as we contended they would when these new rules were passed. Is this really what we want our zoning to do? Is this really what we want our city, and our neighborhood, to look like — supertall towers with giant luxury condo units no one lives in and no one can afford?"

"We were told that 'City of Yes' would deliver more housing that fits our neighborhoods and includes affordability — but this project does neither," **said Councilmember Harvey Epstein.**

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"A 538-foot luxury tower with just 36 units and no affordable housing will tower over Greenwich Village and undermine the very character that makes this community special. If current zoning allows this, then it's clear the rules must be fixed to require development that respects neighborhood scale and delivers real affordability for New Yorkers."

"As we all know, the city is experiencing an affordable housing crisis — a problem that profoundly affects my district given the high volume of luxury developers that choose to build fewer, more expensive units for the ultra-wealthy, with no requirement that they build affordable units," **said Assemblymember Deborah Glick**. "'City of Yes' was implemented to alleviate this lack of affordable housing, yet the proposed luxury tower at 5 West 13th Street clearly shows where the zoning amendment has fallen short. A 538 feet tall building with 36 luxury condos and not a single affordable unit is unacceptable."

"We want to make sure that zoning advances affordability, and a massive 30-story building with only 36 units does exactly the opposite," **said Val Orselli, from This Land Is Ours Community Land Trust**. "This project goes against the promise of building an inclusive city and instead prioritizes luxury over the real housing needs of our communities."

Those gathered called for zoning that encourages new housing development that maintains the scale of neighborhoods like Greenwich Village while encouraging or requiring the inclusion of affordable housing. Such changes would require the support of the Mayor. Village Preservation has long contended that "City of Yes" would ultimately result in larger, taller condo towers with no affordable housing (see [villagepreservation.org/city-of-yes-approval](http://villagepreservation.org/city-of-yes-approval)).

*Video of the press conference will be posted when available at [youtube.com/gvshp](https://youtube.com/gvshp).*

*Images of the press conference will be posted when available at [flickr.com/gvshp](https://flickr.com/gvshp).*

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